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Torrance School Notes

TORRANCE HIGH

Woodshop classes under the direction of Mr. William Burk, instructor, are building the ceiling for the stage set to be used in the senior class play, "The Thirteenth Chair," to be given on Friday, December 13.

The ceiling is not permanent, and may be used in other sets for future use.

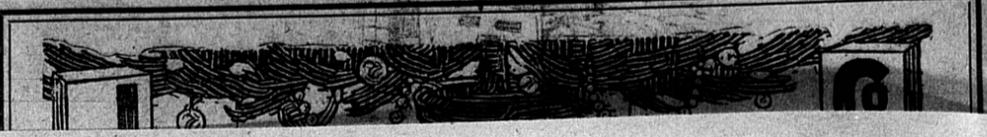
A roll of tickets, each bearing the name of Torrance high school, has been purchased. These tickets will be used as gate tickets for admission to athletic events, auditorium door sales, candy and ice cream tickets, and for other school purposes where tickets are necessary.

Furniture for the new science hall, the new cafeteria and other departments is being delivered this week. By the end of the week it is expected to have the school in operation.

The printing department, under the direction of Mr. Herrens, recently printed lists for use among the students are now at work on the same.

These books will be among the students of junior and senior high school contain the school calendar, a copy of the various building grounds, a copy of the regulations, requirements for admission, the constitution and explanation of student government and the system of courses of study, etc.

Views of the school published in the annual list year, were mounted and presented to the Chamber of Commerce recently for use in their office. The pictures were a gift to the school.



CALIFORNIA NEWS REVIEW

FOUR

The Counties

(Continued)

inter-state traffic matters, and this situation would create a "legal vacuum."

Along with the Commission's appeal and supporting it went also the appeal of the three railroads involved—the Southern Pacific, the Los Angeles & Salt Lake (Union Pacific) and the Santa Fe.

When arguments were completed, the Supreme Court announced that it had taken the case under advisement, that its decision might be announced within six weeks, but would not indicate its stand on the case.

Health Mergers

Important is the position taken by the public health department in all cities, large and small. It eliminates epidemics, controls disease, enforces quarantines; makes the city's inhabitants "health-conscious."

Many cities, small in population, with low incomes, cannot afford large public health departments; are forced to resort to make-shifts. Because of this, many health mergers have resulted; many cities have merged their own health departments with the county health divisions, with other city health activities.

Last week Dr. Walter M. Dickie, Director of the State Department of Public Health, reported that during the past five years, 65 California cities had formed health mergers with the county health divisions. Of these 30 were in Los Angeles County, making the Los Angeles County Health Department the largest in the United States.

Similar transfers had occurred in San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties. Stated Public Health Director Dickie: Now these 65 cities, at lower costs to themselves, received more adequate service, run less risk, are assured of more efficient and intelligent public health service.

No Port Unity

Component parts of a common tidal basin are the harbors of Los Angeles (San Pedro) and Long Beach. Oldest, largest, representing an investment of some \$20,000,000 is Los Angeles harbor, second only to New York in tonnage handled. Newer, smaller, representing an investment of \$5,000,000 is Long Beach's end of the harbor basin. For five long years, Los Angeles and Long Beach have tried to agree on a unification of their harbors, to tear down the mythical "spite wall" dividing the ports. For five long years nothing but discord has attended the efforts of the unification proponents.

Both eager for Federal funds to develop their ends of the harbor, Long Beach and Los Angeles last April appealed to the U. S. government. The government responded, promised a subsidy of \$2,000,000 for the construction of a \$14,000,000 breakwater extension, but attached a string to its offer. The string: Before Federal monies are forthcoming, Long Beach and Los Angeles must agree upon port unification, not port federation, and must put an end to their squabbling of the past five years.

Therefore, to bring about unification and amity, committees were appointed by the mayors of Long Beach and Los Angeles. They were to meet, iron out past disagreements, perfect a plan to make the harbors one. Early in September the joint committees met (News Review, Sept. 2-8). To all in attendance at the initial meeting, the plan to make the Long Beach and Los Angeles harbor one, seemed feasible enough. Committeemen were told that if the harbors were unified, in one year a business increase of a million dollars was inevitable, that further increases would be phenomenal; that a little dredging and the building of a breakwater would convert the two harbors into one of the finest single harbors in the world. Charles H. Matson of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce's Department of Foreign Commerce told Long Beach and Los Angeles representatives that "commerce knows no municipal boundaries... danger lies in cut-throat competition between the two ports... unification means the increased ability to carry through improvements essential to the mutual good of the sister ports." Los Angeles Mayor Porter and Long Beach Mayor Houge smiled benignly when they heard reports of the meeting, predicted immediate agreement on unification.



COLUMBIA STEEL'S GIANT PLANT AT TORRANCE
Making steel, not fighting competitors, is the new owner's concern.

Last week, however, after two months of consideration following the September meeting, unity of the two ports seemed as far away as it has ever been. Generally accepted reason: Los Angeles is unwilling that Long Beach be permitted to have half jurisdiction in the control of its (Los Angeles) harbor. This was the opinion of observers after reading the report last week of the Los Angeles committee to the Long Beach committee. Long Beach, equally obstinate, stuck to its assertion that it should have equal representation on the board of control of the two harbors. Said the Los Angeles committee to the Long Beach advocates of fifty-fifty control: "We do not feel that we can endorse or recommend such a plan."

Meanwhile November 18 rapidly approaches the date on which the two cities must have agreed upon unity, and report their plan of unification to the U. S. Government and thus get the \$7,000,000 subsidy. While Los Angeles and Long Beach committees continued to haggle, to hurl jibes, accusations at each other, the following plans of action seemed imminent: 1) that the cities work out their own salvation, that they develop independently their own harbors; thus dropping the possibility of unification; 2) that the cities send delegates to the meeting of the Board of Engineers of Rivers and Harbors, asking it to reconsider the stipulations of its subsidy with the view of providing additional deep water anchorage for the U. S. Fleet, other requirements of commerce and navigation, without the necessity of unification.

Two to Three

Not so simple as it first seemed was the long-anticipated annexation election to decide whether or not a certain ten-acre area, known as the Watson tract, is to become a part of the City of Ventura. Owner Mrs. Mary K. Watson first petitioned Ventura last summer, was told an election would be held this month. Just prior to the date scheduled, the discovery of new State annexation laws necessitated postponement, required a new petitioning. (News Review, Oct. 21-27).

Last week, Tract-Owner Mrs. Watson re-petitioned the City Council; her request was granted, the new election day set for December 2. Arose a new complication. Formerly there were two residents of the tract eligible to vote: Mrs. Watson and her employee, Harry L. Foster. Now there is a third: Mrs. Sarah Kellogg.

Not perturbed is Tract-Owner Mrs. Watson about possible dissension in the ranks. Reason: her vote and that of her employee she is certain of; the third vote is her mother's.

Pelicans Vindicated

The dignified minions of the State last fortnight thought they had been defied. The State Fish and Game Commission had dumped a load of slippery striped bass in the shallow, brackish shore waters of the Salton Sea (Imperial County). Next day were seen a group of long-legged, baggy-beaked pelicans, supposedly eating the State's new fish. (News Review, Oct. 28-Nov. 3).

But further reports last week vindicated the guileless birds, showed that the pelicans, hungry, had not eaten live fish, but had only fed on the floating dead fish, the live fish swimming underneath the unrippled surface, the pelicans had not harmed them.

Knowing this, the State renewed its efforts to stock the Salton Sea with more game fish, shipped in a second load of striped bass from Salt Flats at Vallejo. Experts believe this type of fish will readily adapt itself to the water of the Salton Sea, multiply, and make excellent sport for many a fisherman.

Catastrophe

Last week blackened stumps, scorched buildings, charred areas gave mute testimony of crackling fires which a fortnight ago had devastated Southern California's fertile acres, had ravaged huge swathes through valuable watersheds. (News Review, Oct. 28-Nov. 2). Although extinguished had been the Ventura and Los Angeles county fires, San Diego County brush conflagrations were still raging.

Most serious was the new brush fire which flamed up in the Los Penasquitos district last week. Immediately it dashed fire crews, a county fire truck; sought to stamp it out before it assumed too great proportions. Strong east winds outwitted the fire fighters, swept the flames toward Los Penasquitos Canyon, toward La Jolla Valley.

Chief Fire-fighter Luther C. Gordon wanted no fires, once extinguished, to spring up again. Fifty men were directed to patrol the Viejas Mountain country, where blazes wreaked considerable damage last fortnight. The fire out, "hot spots" still remained, were deemed inflammable because of prevalent high temperatures, strong winds, low humidity readings.

Not restricted to brush and forests were Southern California's fires of the past fortnight. Defective wiring in the Malibu beach home of Cinema Director Richard Rosson, last week caused a serious conflagration, which raged throughout the cinema colony, damaging a dozen residences. The total loss approximated \$200,000; individual losses ranged from \$500 to \$30,000.

Fatal Frolics

In San Luis Obispo, Housewife Mrs. V. C. Jerram made ready on the night of Halloween to go to a party. Hawaiian-costumed she frolicked sportively in the kitchen of her home, giggled gaily at her amused husband. Around and around she merrily whirled. Her wildfling grass skirt flirited with an illuminated gas stove, caught fire, blazed up! made of the strawlike dancing woman a flaming human torch. Husband Jerram strove to

extinguish the fire, failed until too late.

In Norwalk on Halloween night, 12-year-old Velma Hefflin clutched proudly her ugly, leering jack-o-lantern. She wanted to frighten people with it, to make them jump back, startled. The lantern on her head, she dashed into the street; thought to halt motorists, then laugh at them. She did not know the flame had blown out. Motorist Floyd Fulton did not see the child; his car crashed into her, hurled her body 50 feet to immediate death. His frantic attempt to stop had locked his car's brakes; he turned turtle, was not injured.

In Ontario another Halloween quick-witted Mrs. G. A. White, a group of youngsters, gambling near her home, heard an airplane humming overhead, sought to locate it in the sky. Ten-year-old Roberta Clark peered upward, held her lighted jack-o-lantern behind her. A playmate saw the child's flimsy costume catch fire, flare up; shrieked: "Roberta is on fire!" To the rescue dashed Mrs. White, enveloped her screaming sprite in a coat, smothered the darting tongues of flame.

Business

Columbia-U. S. Steel

In a traditional Big Business manner, the long arm of the United States Steel Corporation reached west last week, to Southern California. Not unexpectedly—for the business world had long contemplated it—United States Steel exercised its option, and purchased, for approximately \$46,650,000 worth of its own stock, the business of the Columbia Steel Corporation, whose plant is located at Torrance. (See cut.) In this action of the United States Steel Corporation, the steel industry visualized the world's largest steel concern, hitherto confined to Chicago, Pittsburgh, Gary, Ind., and Birmingham, Ala., expanding into the great West, moving from one coast to the other.

As it consummated the deal, United States Steel issued the following statement as the reason for its move: "The better to serve our existing trade as well as to prepare for the future growth in domestic and foreign trade by service from Pacific Coast plants."

Hearsay-thinker Brisbane, pondering the steel purchase, wrote his observations, said the purchase of Columbia Steel by the larger eastern company showed the wisdom of modern industry. Under antiquated methods Big Steel would have moved to the Pacific to fight Columbia and try to put it out of business. Instead (due to its purchase), the big company would concern itself with making steel, not with fighting competitors.

Although the Columbia Steel has properties at Provo, Utah, Portland, and Pittsburgh, almost one-fourth of the sum paid by United States Steel for all Columbia-holdings was to cover the cost of the Torrance plant. Present mills at Torrance include a foundry, an open-hearth

steel plant and rolling mill. Almost 100 men are employed and their combined wages amount to \$250,000 per month. At present, United States Steel announces no change of policy in its newly acquired holdings.

Local industrialists last week were watching closely, hoping for an insight on the methods of the newcomer in meeting western and trans-pacific requirements in the entire range of steel products.

California Borax

When eyes are tired, a soothing potion is borax acid. To obtain this crystalline compound in large quantities, commercial men journey to the distant shores of Tuscany, to the blue volcanic lagoons of the Mediterranean. Scientific men learned that borax could be produced from borax, another crystalline compound used as a disinfectant and a flux (makes hard water soft). Therefore borax came to be valuable, money-seeking individuals sought it.

Over the lengthy stretches of the Antelope Valley, in vicinity of Lancaster, the Suckow Borax Company found producers to lose. Their Lancaster plant grew and prospered until last week they announced the shipment of a shipload of their product to far away Holland. Lancaster borax producers believe they have found a permanent market with several Dutch concerns.

Other California borax companies have also exported their product to Europe, but not with the greatest possible measure of success. Los Angeles companies for some time have shipped borax to France. Last week from Paris came astounding news that the Los Angeles companies has gerrymandered the French Customs Service out of many millions of francs, and at the same time the French borax producers to lose more than a billion francs worth of business. Reason: The Los Angeles firms knew that Italian duties on American borax were only 42 cents, that French duties amounted to \$1.08. Craftily, the California companies shipped direct to Italy, repacked their produce and sold it in France, saved 56 cents on every 220 pounds. Irate Frenchmen of the Customs Service bristled in wrath, gesticulated.

Asama Maru

A magnificently proportioned ship of the sea last week steamed quietly into Los Angeles Harbor, and with little hubbub, berthed at the N. Y. K. (Nippon Yusen Kaisha) terminal. It was the Asama Maru, first of a fleet of three \$6,000,000 motor liners flying the Sun flag of Japan, lately built for Pacific service. And quietly as it entered the Southern California harbor, so unobtrusively did it signalize Nippon's bid for a high commercial foothold in the Pacific trade area. For this ship, and its two sisters, now under construction, are expected to form the vanguard of a magnificent Japanese fleet which will seek to bring trade home to her own markets.

Southern California visitors who last week were shown about the interior of the Asama Maru saw that the builders had left out no detail. They saw well-appointed bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms, which little suggested that they were part of a ship, and the ship was Japanese. Examples: A Tudor-styled smoking room, a Roman-styled swimming bath, a Georgian-styled lounge room, a Spanish veranda. Only the sitting room is Japanese.

Mechanically inclined visitors noted the following as they wandered about the clean-scrubbed plank decks and scrambled down iron ladders into the ship's hold: That the Asama Maru was 584 feet long (average Ecuador length on the Atlantic run), 72 feet in beam; 16,800 tons in weight; driven by four Busch-Sulzer Diesel engines at a speed of 19 knots per hour. (Bremen, holder of Atlantic blue ribbon for speed and world's record, is capable of 28 knots). Also they noted that every device of modern navigation and sea communication had been installed, including a Sperry gyroscopic compass (unlike the magnetic compass, the Sperry works independently of the Magnetic North); automatic steeringman, radio direction finder and compass. They were shown lifeboats equipped with motors, radios, searchlights, and electric devices for heating and cooking.

With such ships, the almond-eyed Nipponese expect to attract a huge bulk of the 72 feet passenger liner, not forgetting the commercial trade. Late in the week the Asama Maru hauled anchor, left for San Francisco.

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The New

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